

CMS Equity Policy Outline

Purpose:

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education adopts this policy to ensure fair and equitable educational opportunities for all students. The Board ~~want~~ commits to breaking the historic and continuing ~~and historic~~ predictive links among student socio-economics status, race, and ethnicity to educational opportunities and achievement.

This policy sets forth equity levers that impact student achievement, outlines a measurement rubric, and creates a monitoring mechanism. The Board directs staff to document, reduce, and ultimately eliminate the disparities and gaps that have persisted among subgroups of students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools so that every student achieves full potential. The Board recognizes that there are other many other factors that contribute to inequities, opportunity gaps, and achievement gaps. ~~These include the level of parent engagement, and the cultural competency of the staff. However, this~~ This policy seeks to focus on those aspects of equity that can be quantified in a meaningful way documented.

Definition:

The Board defines equity as providing the opportunities, support, environment, high expectations, and resources that every student needs to achieve educational success, feel valued, and contribute to a thriving community. ~~This policy directs staff to document, reduce, and ultimately eliminate the disparities and gaps that have persisted among subgroups of students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and kept them from achieving their full potential.~~

Equity Levers crucial to student success:

The Board recognizes that a number of factors influence success for all students. These factors include: (1) pupil assignment; (2) educational opportunities and high expectations; (3) social and emotional health of students; (4) well maintained, safe facilities and adequate resources; (5) quality, experience, and stability of school leadership and staff; (6) Family Engagment and Communications.

Equity Reports:

The Superintendent or designee shall provide separate reports for each of the five Equity Levers listed above. The Reports shall be presented to the Board each quarter such that each of the five reports is delivered over the course of 15 months. The goals and measurements for each report are listed below. In order to access the gaps in disparities among student subgroups, reports should disaggregate data by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status (SES).

Goals and Measurements for Equity Levers:

1. Pupil Assignment

As stated in Policy JCA, the Board seeks to: *“Reduce the number of schools with high concentrations of poor and high-needs children.”* The Pupil Assignment Report will present the changes in SES composition of schools along with recommendations for reducing the number of schools with high concentrations of poor and high-needs children.

2. Educational Opportunities and High Expectations

All students deserve access to a rich and diverse curriculum that includes advanced level course, including language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, history, and the arts. The high expectations of teachers have a profound influence on student success.

The Educational Opportunities and High Expectation Report shall include school level data demonstrating access to advanced curriculum, career and technical educational options, and visual and performing arts. The Report shall also include a description of the technology resources available to students and how those resources are used to support and enhance instruction. In addition, the Report shall include a description of each school’s media resources: the number of books per student, and the median age of the collection.

In order to assess the level of expectations at schools, the Superintendent shall monitor sampling of student work across the district to ensure that grade level work has the same expectation from school to school. Additionally, to monitor student access to instructional time, the report shall include day/hours spent on assessments and practice assessments at the school level. These shall include school generated grade level tests, intensive monitoring assessments, and all standardized assessments.

3. Social and Emotional support

Meeting students’ social and emotional needs is crucial to their success. Students experiencing multiple traumas – from housing and food insecurity, to domestic violence, and mental health issues need support from social workers, counselors, and psychologists to ensure success.

One reflection of student social emotional health is student behavior as reflected in student discipline and attendance. This report shall present numbers of out-of-school suspensions, descriptions of in-school suspension programs, and intervention programs used to prevent suspensions and support positive behaviors and school attendance.

Student Discipline. Disproportionality in disciplinary actions are linked to implicit bias. While a single staff development training cannot inoculate against bias, cultural competency training can raise awareness of the issues and begin to improve school culture. This report shall include the number of staff, and percent of staff at each school who have participated in RMJJ Dismantling Racism and other similar trainings.

Student Attendance. Student attendance is crucial to student success. This report shall document disparities in attendance across schools and include descriptions of strategies used to improve school attendance.

4. Facilities and Material Resources

Every student deserves to attend a clean and well-maintained facility stocked with the needed educational resources. Schools with active parent advocates can effectively lobby for facilities and resource needs. We must ensure that schools without parent/community advocates receive equitable access to facility and material resources.

This report shall include for each school items such as:

- Facility age and condition
- Condition of outdoor spaces including parking areas, athletic facilities, and playgrounds.
- For middle grades (6-8) and high schools, the on-site sports facilities available to students.

5. Human Resources, Leadership and Staff

School success depends on strong leadership with a stable high-quality staff. Our most challenged schools have often suffered from high turnover in leadership and staffing, teacher absenteeism, long-term substitutes, greater numbers of inexperienced teachers, and higher than average numbers of provisionally licensed teachers or teachers teaching out of certification. The Human Resources, Leadership and Staff report will document these and other factors to enable comparison of the equitable distribution of human resources across schools.

6. Family Engagement and Communication

Parent involvement is essential for a child's development. The links between school and parental engagement have been recognized as having a strong impact on factors such as academic success, reduced suspension and drop-out rates. To improve perceptions of our schools as inviting learning environments, it is imperative that communication protocols be initiated by the school. This proactive

engagement informs and encourages the core values and principles that form the foundation of each school. Additionally, all schools must make family and stakeholders aware of all lines of communication and support beyond the school building level.

In order to assess the level of home/school partnership in every school, the Superintendent shall:

- Actively support and monitor parent representation and active participation in school-wide organizational groups, such as, School Leadership Teams [SLT], PTA/PTO.
- Direct schools to report in their annual School Improvement Plans the strategies and programs undertaken to actively involve parents in their child's school experience.
- Recognize that while child advocacy is not always available through custodial parent engagement; it is helpful to children's self-esteem and academic success that they receive positive intervention through one-to-one volunteer and mentor partnerships to enable student's critical thinking and problem-solving.

Meaningful and mutual communication between home and school is vital to improving students' school experience.

In order to improve home/school communication, the Superintendent shall:

- Require the development and documentation of parent-friendly communication and participation strategies at every school. Emphasize invitational communication with families through a variety of face-to-face or person-to-person interactions. This is more often effective relationship-building communication with families than the use of technical gadgetry.
- Strengthen relationships with families via standardizing and implementing clear and transparent processes and communications protocols to receive all inquiries and concerns that parents feel that they need to reach beyond their child's school.
- Develop customer-service training and protocols for front-line employees at the school level.
- Provide cultural diversity training for all school leaders and staff.

Equity Advisory Panel

The Board shall appoint an eleven-member Equity Advisory Panel consisting of:

- A total of two members selected from local educational institutions: University of North Carolina – Charlotte, College of Education, Central Piedmont Community College, Johnson C. Smith University, Queens University
- Four representatives from CMS partner organizations, community advocacy groups, and/or philanthropic organizations.
- Three community members selected by the Board
- One Board of Education members selected by the Board Chair who will serve ex officio. These members are limited to a one-year term.
- One staff member designated by the Superintendent (non-voting liaison)

The Advisory Panel Chair shall be appointed by the Board.

Equity Advisory Panel members shall serve three-year staggered terms, with a limit of two terms. Five (exclusive of Chair) of the first appointees will be chosen at random to serve two-year terms to establish staggered terms.

The Advisory Panel will meet approximately twice per quarter. Members missing three consecutive meetings, or five meetings within twelve months will be considered inactive and will be replaced.

Charge of the Equity Advisory Panel

- To review quarterly Equity Reports, monitor progress toward equity, and raise issues and opportunities concerning equity to the Board
- Enlist support of the greater community to the cause of equity in CMS based on the findings of Advisory Panel
- To recommend additional data that should be included in future reports